



FEMA

FACT SHEET

National Level Exercise 2011 (NLE 2011)

National Level Exercise 2011 (NLE 11) is scheduled for May 2011. The purpose of the exercise is to prepare and coordinate a multiple-jurisdictional integrated response to a national catastrophic event.

National level exercises (formerly known as the Top Officials exercise series or TOPOFF) are conducted in accordance with the National Exercise Program (NEP), which serves as the nation's overarching exercise program for planning, organizing, conducting and evaluating national level exercises. The NEP was established to provide the U.S. government, at all levels, exercise opportunities to prepare for catastrophic crises ranging from terrorism to natural disasters.

NLE 11 is a White House directed Congressionally-mandated exercise that includes the participation of all appropriate Federal department and agency senior officials, their deputies and staff; and key operational elements. NLE 11 will focus on regional catastrophic response and recovery activities between Federal, regional, State, tribal, local and private sector participants.

EXERCISE FOCUS

NLE 11 will simulate the catastrophic nature of a major earthquake in the central United States region of the New Madrid Seismic Zone (NMSZ). The year 2011 is the bicentennial anniversary of the 1811 New Madrid earthquake, for which the NMSZ is named. NLE 2011 will be the first NLE to simulate a natural hazard.

NLE 11 activities will take place at command posts, emergency operation centers and other locations to include Federal facilities in the Washington D.C. area and Federal, regional, State, tribal, local and private sector facilities in the eight member States of the Central United States Earthquake Consortium (CUSEC). The eight member States of CUSEC encompass four different FEMA regions: Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Tennessee (FEMA Region IV); Illinois and Indiana (FEMA Region V); Arkansas (FEMA Region VI); and Missouri (FEMA Region VII).

EXERCISE OBJECTIVES

Through a comprehensive evaluation process, the exercise will assess response and recovery capabilities both nationally and regionally. The exercise is designed to validate the following capabilities:

- Communications
- Critical resource logistics and distribution
- Mass care (sheltering, feeding and related services)
- Medical surge
- Citizen evacuation and shelter-in-place
- Emergency public information and warning
- Emergency operations center (EOC) management
- Long term recovery

VALIDATING THE HOMELAND SECURITY SYSTEM

Exercises such as NLE 11 are an important component of national preparedness, helping to build an integrated Federal, State, tribal, local and private sector capability to manage a catastrophic event; and rapidly and effectively respond to and recover from any major disaster that occurs.

The functional exercise offers agencies and jurisdictions a way to test their plans and skills in a real-time, realistic environment and to gain the in-depth knowledge that only experience can provide. Participants will exercise response and recovery functions that are critical to responding to a catastrophic event. Lessons learned from the exercise will provide valuable insights to guide future planning for disasters and other emergencies.

For the latest NLE 11 news and developments, please visit www.ready.gov/nle2011.

FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.